

RESOLUTION
10th National Municipal Reform Support Forum

Sochi
September 24, 2010

The participants in the 10th National Municipal Reform Support Forum concluded the following, proceeding from the results of their joint work:

1. During the period of reform (1990-2010) the main local self-government institutions have been formed. The further activities should be aimed at their development and improvement.

2. The territorial organization of local self-government has been harmonized with the applicable legislation in all subjects of the Russian Federation. A tendency toward enlarging the territories of municipal districts, both on reasonable grounds and in their absence, has been observed. To this end, clear criteria and detailed procedures for municipal reorganization should be developed.

3. The basic competence of local self-government has been shaped; however, debating points still remain related to the participation of local self-government in the maintenance of public order and security and in the provision of municipal services in such spheres as education and public health. Additionally, the powers of local self-government have not yet been defined clearly and in full in the relevant legislation. These issues need to be more thoroughly studied by the expert community to provide guidelines for state power authorities.

4. The applicable legislation provides vast possibilities for selecting the structures of local self-government bodies. However, the conditions of applying or refusing to apply the principle of separation of powers are not always justified. The grounds for applying this principle have to be clarified.

5. In the majority of instances, the financial resources of local self-government are insufficient for exercising the powers of local self-government. This situation may be improved through one of the following (or through a combination of the following):

- modify the tax system;
- include additional taxes in local taxes or partially apply them permanently on the local level;
- improve intergovernmental fiscal relations.

Considering the complexity of this issue, the indicated options have to be thoroughly elaborated.

6. Municipal property has been, in the main, formed. At the same time, the objective of land partition remains unfulfilled due to insufficient funding for forming land plots and the large amount of land measuring work.

7. The local self-government legislation provides conditions for establishing horizontal cooperation of local self-government bodies both in the economic and administrative spheres. However, the incompleteness of legal regulation and the gaps and contradictions in the legislation prevent the practical realization of the potential possibilities. The applicable legislation in this sphere has to be improved.

8. Municipalities are engaged in strategic planning of integrated socio-economic development. However, there is an obstacle in the way of this effort – the lack of a single procedural framework and significant gaps in the relevant legislation. The objective of the expert community in this sphere should be the creation of the abovementioned procedural framework and participation in preparing required draft laws.

9. Government authorities are in the process of creating a system for evaluating the performance of local self-government and the level of socio-economic development of municipalities. Thus, this system has to be improved with the help of leading experts in this field.

10. The procedural and technical base of municipal governance is developing consistently, however, not in all spheres of municipal governance the required tools have been

created; and what gives rise to greater concerns is that a large number of local self-government staff does not possess enough skills to use these tools and innovative technologies. Thus, it is necessary to elaborate and improve the procedures and technologies and broadly introduce them into the practice of municipal governance.

11. One of the most essential issues of forming and developing local self-government is citizen participation. Unfortunately, today a noticeable passivity of the population is being observed, as well as an inadequate development of civil society institutions. The effort of public activists, NGOs and government with support from the expert community should be aimed at enhancing the civic engagement of the population.

12. New generation educational standards have been developed and are being introduced in the area of state and municipal governance. The inclusion of these standards in the educational process requires the development of new educational programs and curricula, textbooks, manuals, guidelines and other educational and training materials.

The participants in the Forum also acknowledge that for the effective achievement of the above and other tasks in the sphere of developing local self-government, closer and more regular interaction of experts, practical workers, officials and representative of non-governmental organizations should be established. For this, a large number of “platforms” has to be set up to ensure communication, experience sharing, consultations and other forms of collaboration, including virtual “platforms” in the Internet.

S.N.Yurkova, Chairman
Forum Organizing Committee

A.N.Shirokov, Secretary
Forum Organizing Committee